

Testimony of John Olsen, Vice Chairman of the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund
before the Energy and Technology Committee
On proposed *House Bill 6249 An Act Establishing a Moratorium on the Siting of Wind
Projects Until the Adoption of Regulations*
Thursday, February 3, 2011

Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello, Senator Witkos, Representative Hoydick and members of the Energy and Technology Committee, my name is John Olsen and I am Vice Chairman of the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund (CCEF). I am submitting this testimony on behalf of CCEF in opposition to proposed House Bill 6249 An Act Establishing a Moratorium on the Siting of Wind Projects Until the Adoption of Regulations.

BNE Energy is developing commercial wind projects in the towns of Prospect and Colebrook. These are the first commercial wind projects in the state and are currently under consideration before the Connecticut Siting Council. I have known about these wind projects and have supported them for more than two years. The wind projects are being funded in part with public funds provided by CCEF in order to encourage the development of renewable energy in the state. Under CCEF's Pre-Development Program, BNE received two unsecured loans of \$500,000 each project for a total of \$1,000,000 in funding to develop these projects. Prior to receiving funding, BNE submitted letters of support for the projects from Mayor Chatfield in Prospect, First Selectman McKeon in Colebrook, and various state representatives from those districts. The purpose of the Pre-Development Program is to create a pipeline of eligible projects to compete for Project 150. CCEF strongly supports the development of renewable energy sources in the state including wind, solar, biomass and other Class I renewable energy sources.

BNE's wind projects have been under development for several years and the communities have known about them for over two years. In fact, BNE was required to obtain local approvals from both towns prior to installing a meteorological (Met) tower on the sites to measure wind resources and prove that the projects are viable. The Met towers have been installed for more than two years. Also, with the financial assistance of CCEF, BNE has conducted numerous studies on both sites over a period of more than a year including bird, bat and wildlife studies, sound and visual simulations, wetland impacts, storm water management plans, shadow flicker analysis, ice throw analysis, mechanical loads analysis, site design and turbine layout including proper setbacks, and interconnection studies. They are also planning to install GE turbines on the sites. GE is a Connecticut based company with more than 14,000 turbines in operation worldwide that operate safely and reliably.

As you know, wind projects over one megawatt are regulated by the Siting Council. After significant study, time and money, the first two commercial wind projects are finally squarely before the Council where they will undergo extensive scrutiny. Local officials and opponents are participating in these proceedings and will have a full opportunity to present their positions to the Council. Clearly, there is an extensive process in place today for developing wind and other renewable projects in the state.

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Connecticut doesn't need additional regulations for wind, and it sets a very bad precedent for renewable energy in the state. Likewise, we certainly don't need a Moratorium on wind. CCEF believes that we need more renewable energy projects, including BNE's wind projects built in Connecticut. This bill is simply a project killer and it will devastate the emerging wind industry in the state. Additionally, the federal government has recently extended incentives for renewable energy projects for another year. As state policy makers, we should be working to maximize federal dollars for Connecticut residents, particularly when it's for clean energy projects that benefit our communities. Implementing additional regulations or a Moratorium on wind will prevent projects in Connecticut from availing themselves of federal incentives for renewable energy.

We need clean energy in Connecticut. We certainly do not need more regulations or a moratorium on wind. I strongly urge this Committee to reject H.B. 6249.

Thank you,

John Olsen
Vice Chairman
Connecticut Clean Energy Fund